ART AND LETTERS IN PARIS.

LETTER FROM HENRY JAMES, JR. THE PARISIAN ART MARKET-DECAMP'S DISTINCTIVE MERITS - MARILHAT'S PAINTINGS - ORIENTAL SKETCHES ABUNDANT-MEISSONIER'S "READER" -THE FLOODS IN THE SEINE-CURRENT LITER-

FROM A REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE. PARIS, March 21 .- In default of any topic with a high interest of what the French call "actuality," there is something to say to-day about pictures. I have recently seen a good many; but heaven forbid I should speak of them all! I have seen several. bowever, the reappearance of which in the art market is worth commemorating, and may interest those people at least who keep a record of such matters. Two important collections of French pictures, formed many years ago in Holland, are about to be dispersed in consequence of the death of their owners, and have of course been sent to Paris to be disposed of. This operation is to take place a month hence at the Hotel Dronot, and meanwhile one seems to hear the meditative rattle of coin in the sidepockets of amateurs not compelled, like most newspaper correspondents, to be purely platonic. I had the pleasure, the other day, of having an anticipatory view of these two collections, which are not yet on exhibition, and it yielded me much entertainment. Part of the entertainment was perhaps independent of the rigidly intrinsic merit of Meissonier and Decamps, and consisted in lounging upon an ottoman in a quiet room in an establishment in which the effective presentation of works of art has itself been raised to a fine art, and seeing the gems of the series I mention plucked forth from an adjoining place of deposit and arrayed before me in killful juxtaposition. They certainly order this matter better in France than anywhere in the A catalogue of each of the collections of which I speak has been put forward, illustrated by etchings from eminent hands, many of which are admirable-so much so that people of modest aspirations, possessing the catalogue, may almost cor sole themselves for being unlikely ever to possess any of the works it describes. Among these there are two or three charming Decamps and a couple of small but superlative Meissoniers. Decamps is painter of whom I never tire, and one of the very few French artists in whom, in the long run, one finds it possible to take a sentimental pleasure, counting Delacroix, Millet, and as the others. He is not as pure an original as they, but like them he has an element of magic, of independence of fancy-the precious something that gives its highest value to a work of art that can be learned in no school, and in its absence replaced by no amount of practice. If practice could give it, Meissonier, Gérome and two or three of their supremely clever confrères ought to be rich in it ; but in fact these gentlemen only prove that it is possible to go a good way without it. One of the specimens of Decamps is a small picture of a little peasant girl sitting ander a tree in Springwhen the leaves above her are yet sparse, but the grass around her thick-strewn with anemones, and thrusting a great shee of the bread and butter with which she is besmearing her infant lips at a little white kid, who stands beside her. The subject is not heroic, and to call the scene pastoral, even, seems an exaggeration of its pretensions But it is truly exquisite, and the landscape, beyond the figures, which are immediately in front, and in shadow, melts away into soft Italian crass and undulations, and glows with silver light. No painter plays with effects of light so delicately, and on the whole, so unerringly, as Decamps. He shrinks from none of the atmospheric mysteries and complexities. He may easily be accused, of course, of playing too much, and be reminded that, according to the canons which have come into fashion of recent years, to play in a picture, to disport oneself, desipere, is very nearly as wicked as to play on a Sunday-that a picture is indeed a kind of concentrated Sunday, a transported battle-ground of right and wrong, a deadly, solemn, and responsible thing. He will have however always, even in his most criminal aberrations, a good many admirers among the people who cannot help believing that the great charm of art is in its being a change from life, and not a still narrower consciousness of it, and who, even if he were a less brilliant genius, would prize in Decamps his strong expression of this sentiment. Another example of the same painter is a picture of a couple of Italian pifferari, piping before an image of the Madonna, in the close, hot streets of some little southern city. It is a masterpiece as regards the treatment of reflected lights, for there are none others. The yellow afternoon sanshine, confined till it grows thick, as it were, between walls of moldering travertine reflected muon one, and thence another, and broken and mixed with vague, brown shadows, is here represented with admirable verity. Any one who has walked in the streets of small Italian towns late in the long Summer days will particularly relish this little picture. Such an observer will seem to feel the warm dead air again, and in the places on which his eyes lingered, all the

mellow-the almost golden-dreariness. A painter whom I always meet with pleasure, though unfortunately one meets him but seldom, as he died many years since, prematurely, before the list of his works had grown long, is Marilhat, the precursor of the innumerable tribe of elever Frenchmen who during the last twenty years have "ex ploited" the Orient. I do not know what Marilhat would have been doing now if he had lived to our own day; but coming when he did, and stopping when he did, he has a charm of which we must give him all the credit. It is an unhappy thing in France, that as soon as an individual makes a hit, in a certain line, in any of the arts, he immediately, and in spite of himself, founds a school-calls into activity a multitude of other persons who forthwith proceed to "do" that particular thing; to manufacture it, to elaborate the apparatus and perfect the system, so that it may be turned off in large quantities. The discovery by Delacroix and Decamps, 40 years ago, that the bazaars of Cairo and Constantinople afforded a harvest of picturesque subjects, is an excellent case in point. It took a little while for the movement to spread, and Marilhat, coming first, at his leisure, is fresh charming, and sincere. Marithat's natural refine ment, his agreeable fancy, his simple and skillful touch, are capitally illustrated in an extremely beautiful picture which I the other day had before me great group of cedars perched on a huge, picturesqu embankment of masonry, above a fountain, with a group of camel-drivers and their beasts resting in shade. It is the old East-the East of 40 years ago, before the era of scamboats on the Nile and the British purchase of the Khedive's shares; and there is in particular a certain old white-walled castle in the middle distance, which, with its faint gleams and its vague shadows, is alone, in vulgar parlance, worth the price of the picture. But after Marilhat came the troop among whom Gérome is easily chief, and who have ransacked and rifled the Oriental world of the uttermost vestige of its mystery. The trick has been learned, the recipe has been espied, passed through ten thousand hands, For some people the absolutely mechanical eleverness of Gérome has produced, as regards the East, a complete disenchantment. The worst of all this in France is that the secondary people, the imitators, the school, the queue, are generally so odiously clever that to a certain extent they challenge comparison with their betters.

The collections I have mentioned contain two extraordinary little pictures by Mcissonier-minute masterpieces each. I did not rank Meissonier just now among the French painters I much care for but there is none we much more greatly admire. One of the diminutive panels I mention represents a couple of medieval lanzkneckts-a battered and grazzled old veteran, scated against a wall, and a companion standing beside him. This younger man, with his broad, round, densely-curled head, his widely divided eyes, his short, narrow beard, his hard, good-humored face, the perfection of the choice of his type as an adjunct to a dented cuirass and a pair of faded red velvet sleeves, is beyond all praise. He is as solid and complete as if we had heard him whist-ling while he polished his battered breastplate. An even greater trium on is the other picture, which

is famous under the title of "The Reader." Ah! what a reader! He is a man of 40, clad in a red velvet gown of the 16th century, sitting upright in a shallow arm-chair, which supports his elbows, and holding open, with the most delicate and sympathetic fingers, a goodly little volume of the period, upon which his intelligent brow is bent with a slight, pleasurable contraction, while his bearded lips are vaguely pushed forward. Here is much in little, if there ever was-life, thought, history, dignity, culture, all condensed into the expression of a figure which you need a magnifying glass to look at properly. There could not be more of it if it were six feet high, and we could not believe more thoroughly in his admirable red velvet gown (it is hard to think that something fine did not pass out of human character when gentlemen used to wear such garments) if we had been his valet de chambre, and helped him to put it on. The head is to some extent a portrait of the artist.

Of the various pictures which I saw in combination with these, I have left myself no space to speak; well-chosen specimens as they each were, formed a very honorable and brilliant summary of the French school-exclusive of its landscapists. There were, in particular, some admirable examples of the cattle-painter Brascassat, who is little known in America, but who seems to me to handle his bulls and oxen in a much grander fashion than Rosa Bonheur. He has a striking resemblance to Paul Potter. Let me commemorate also a couple of pictures by a young man named Baillet, a pupil of Breton, the painter of fishwives and harvest-women, half bovine, half statuesque. M. Baillet is almost as good as his master, and the day be becomes quite as good he will be better. One of the subjects of which I speak-a group of peasant women washing clothes in some fresh-water pools near the sea, in the early twilight-is a very noble performance, and displays a union of imagination and self-control which speaks well for the artist's future. It may be expected to make an impression in the forthcoming Salon. I can also not deny myself the satisfaction of turning a compliment to a young Italian painter, Boldini by name, for an admirable work to which, in my extreme relish for it, I lately paid more than one visit. (The picture in question, I must hasten to add, is like others to which I have had the honor of alluding, the property of Mr. A. T. Stewart. I feel, in this connection, like the cat in the fairy tale, point ing out the possessions of the Marquis of Carabas. My compliment to M. Boldini, to be in keeping. should be flowery and ceremonious, like the diction of the last century. He is the most skillful among the little band of Italian painters which has cominto being within a few years past, with powder and brocade, rococo fountains, sedan-chairs, and poodles for their especial inspiration. It is a sort of neo-Watteau movement, and its obvious reproach is that of triviality. Its equally obvious charm is that it is irresistibly entertaining; it has a naïveté, good faith, a light jocularity quite distinct from the stale, skeptical eleverness which characterizes so much French art. M. Boldini's picture represents a corner of the park at Versailles under Louis XVI A sedau-chair containing a fine lady, escorted by several fops and élépantes, has been deposited, while the carriers stand resting, beneath a great wall of horse-chestnut trees. Near by is a fountain and a couple of statues, and where the horse-chestnuts stop a broad cedar spreads itself into the brilliant Summe light. The figures are very small-they belong to the class of what the French call little bonshommes; but their animation, expressiveness, and grace, the shimmer of their brocades and velvets, the gleam of their tense silk stockings, the way they hollow their backs and turn out their toes, are all extraordinary and delightful. The artist has a real divination of the costume of the time and the way it must have been worn. His great triumph here, however, has been his landscape-his great mass of verdure, and his dazzling, almost blinding Summer light. This is so intense that in spite of its immense quantity of green, the picture is almost too white. But as a representation of objects shining and glowing in the open air, and as an almost childishly irreflective piece of fantasy, the work is a singular success.

In saying that there were just now no Parisia "actualities" of the first importance, I may seem to have slighted the overflow of the Seine, which has lately given Paris and its neighborhood plenty to talk about. The waters, moreover, are now fast subsiding, and the subject is a painful one, owing to the suffering and injury inflicted upon the poor people who form almost exclusively the population of the flooded quarters. Both up and down the river, outside of the center of Paris, everything habitable has been knee-deep in the water. took a long walk the other night along the quays, past Notre Dame and the Jardin des Plantes, to see the immersion of Bercy. Since 1848 the river had not been so high, but its present condition, like a great many painful and cruel things, was extremely picturesque. In the city it has been for a fortnight as big as a young Mississippi-doubling its apparent breadth from quay to quay, hiding the arches of the bridges up to the key-stone, lifting up its barges and floating-baths and swimming-schools into unprece dented intimacy with the basements of the houses and keeping half the badauds-the Paris cockneyshanging all day over the parapets to watch a new centimetre disappear on the painted scale, Poor Bercy, in the sparsely-illuminated darkness, looked like a little prosaic Venice, with boats paddling about in the streets and Parisian lamp-posts rising out of moddy lagoons.

The only literary event of first-rate importance that has occurred in Paris during the Winter has been the publication of Taine's "Ancien Régime," of which, at the time, I made mention. In so sterile season I suppose that the appearance in the last number of the Revue des Deux Mondes, of the first installment of Ernest Renan's "Souvenirs d'Enfance may be spoken of as a salient event. The article appears to have attracted much attention, but to have caused some disappointment. It consists of two parts-a few pages of personal reminiscence by M. Renan himself, and a narrative taken down-with considerable embellishment-from the lips of his mother. The story is tame and of slender significance; but M. Renan's own memoirs are enchanting. His touch is more exquisite, his style more magical surely, than any others of the day. The death of Daniel Stern (Mme. d'Agoult) and that of Mme Louise Colet may also be spoken of as literary incidents. Mme. d'Agoult was a serious writer and Mme. Colet a light one, but both ladies had had beauty and adventures. Of these adventures the Abbé Liszt was the hero in one case, and Alfred de Musset in the other. I saw quoted the other day from Mme d'Agoult a felicitous sentence: " An agrecable mind is a mind that is affirmative only in the measure strictly necessary." This dictum is characteristic of a writer who was also a very skillful maitresse de salon. Mme. Colet never said anything so good a that, Some years ago, when Mme. Sand published her very ill-advised "Elle et Lui," and Paul de Musset (the brother of the presumptive original of the hero), retorted with "Lui et Elle," Mme, Colet cried like Correggio, " Aneh' io son pittore!" and put forth a tale entitled "Lui," the purpose of which was to prove, as I remember it, that she used to roam in the Bois du Boulogue in the small hours of the night in a low-necked dress, while "He," roaming hand in hand with her, showered kisses upon her shoulders. "Orpheus and the Bacchantes these contributions to erotic history were happily called. Poor Orphans! HENRY JAMES, JR. 29 Rue de Luxembourg.

WASHINGTON'S ANCESTORS.
To the Editor of The Tribune. SIR: I read with interest the letter under the above title, which was recently published in your paper. I agree with the writer "B," that at all times, and especially. perhaps, at the present, any facts relating to the family of Washington are of value. I have lately been reading an old English book called "Leigh's New Picture of England and Wales," published, I think, about 1820. It gives a description of the different counties, principal towns, easties, &c. In the account of Yorkshire it mention Cave Castle " as being 13 miles from the town of Hull, and describes it as " a noble mansion-house, standing an extensive park. It contains a fine collection of pie tures, among which is a portrait of the celebrated Gen. Washington, whose great grandfather possessed this estate, whence he emigrated in 1657." I give the above just as it is from the book.

Withchester, Va., April 14, 1876.

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

THE CLERICAL QUESTION.

THE CHURCH POLICY OF THE FRENCH-HOSTILITY TO THE JESUITS-MINISTER DUFAURE AND EDU-CATION-THE REPUBLICANS STRONG GALLICANS SATISFACTORY STATE OF THE FINANCES-GAMBETTA'S PROSPECTS AS AN ECONOMIC LEGIS-LATOR.

FROM A REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE. Paris, April 7 .- The question of Church and State is, as we all know, opened and must be in some measure solved within the pext few months. The economical and financial one has also suddenly sprung up by the unexpected nomination by a large najority of Gambetta to the post of Chairman of the Committee to report on the Budget. These two questions are equally vital for this country, and it is curious to remark that both, instead of being thrust upon the Chamber and upon public opinion by the Republican party, have both been, as it were, selfimposed-brought on by the current and by the force of events. It has been already seen how out of the proposal to "inquire" into the election of M. de Mun there all at once burst forth the whole dispute of the separation of Church and State, the one great difficulty of old countries in modern times: Shall the clergy be paid by the Government and therefore submit to the secular power, or shall it be free to preach a crusade against the State, being unpaid ?

Well, this involves discussions of such magnitude that the so-called "advanced" Republicans themelves are by no means sure that it has not been begun too soon. Upon one thing all are determined namely, that M. de Mun's election shall, if it be humanly possible, be validated. The foremost Republicans feel thoroughly how impolitic it would be to appear to fear the "Champion of the Syliabus," and the fact of the validation will be striven for with might and main. But the progress of the 'Inquiry" will lead to complications of which no one can yet guess the extent or the importance. Already, in the interrogatory of M. Dufaure as Minister of Public Worship, a question has been put and subject touched upon which may light up all the flames of religious war.

The question alludes to the teaching in the seminaries-to the principles laid down, and to the fact of whether they are observed or not-and it simply strikes at the root of the whole situation. France is officially Gallican. She is still, at this very hour, subject to the compact enforced in 1682 upon the Papal See by Louis XIV.; upheld by the Restoration (Charles X. drove the Jesuits from land); rigidly maintained by Louis Philippe, and which compact undoubtedly represents and embodies the degree of Catholicisu that the nature of the Gaul can bear easily, and with some sort of sincerity. The Concordat of the first Napoleon, after the sweep made of all belief during the great revolution, ratified in fact and fixed firmly the gains of Louis XIV., the rights of What the famous Bishop of the State in France. Hermopolis (Mgr. de Frayssinous) published in 1826 (as Mmister of Public Worship), was true: "In France," said he, "ecclesiastically speaking, all tends toward Rome, but all is not derived from Rome." Now this is still the law of the land. France is not Jesuitical-or free to be anything else. France s legally Gailican. The Jesuits were allowed to enter France from all sides by Napoleon III., but this was the work of the Spanish Empress, and the Emperor dreamt of finding in them tools wherewith to noodwink the people-but the Jesuits are illegal; their existence is an offense as their teaching is a candal. Still it is a patent fact that for twenty years they alone are teaching here. The Jesuit has everywhere taken the place of the Gallican Christian, and Rome rules where till now ruled the French civil law.

But a tolerated illegality of 20 years' standing above all where priests are concerned) is a monstrons nenbus, and it remains to be seen now how it can e got rid of, or even grappled with. M. Dufaure has premised to examine at once into

the principles taught in seminaries, and to "punish" all derelictions of the law. M. Dufaure may find that he never took so rash an engagement as this. Besides, M. Dufaure is a clerical bimself and lives urrounded in his own family by Jesuits. Neverthe less, come what will, he must either examine narrowly what are the principles inculcated in seminaries and be prepared to uphold the law of the land, or he must retire from the Ministry, for on this point there will be no compromise possible. The Republicans (unless it may be some half dozen fanatics) were not anxious to see this subject broached as it has been suddenly, and before people had fixed upon their war tactics; but now that it has been opened, and that it is staring everybody in the face, it must be discussed and sifted to the very bottom so that a di may be invented by which public opinion shall be satisfied. This is a question on which there are almost as many so-called Conservatives as there are Republicans taking part against the usurpations of the clergy. As a general rule, you may set down all the Left Center and four-fifths of the Right Center as resolute anti-Jesuits, stanch and faithful Gallicaus, This includes men of the stamp of Casimir-Périer, the d'Haussonvilles, Pasquier, the d'Harcourts, Barantes, and all families whose fathers were among the founders of the July nonarchy. The Orleanists as a party are Gallicans, when they have any creed or religious belief at all; just as the Imperialists are Jesnits because they do not, in truth, care one straw for any religion save one whose ministers rely on the force of bayonets. Retigious hypocrisy, genuine Tartufferie, was never in past times a French defect; it was one of the points on which people were sincere and tolerant. From Henri IV, down to the coup d'état in '51 men believed or did not believe, but their consciences were free, and their own; and it was not imputed a sin to man or woman in any coterie or set " not to go to mass or confession, and not to pin their faith to this preacher or to that. This Jesuitical show of piety, so shocking to true Christians, this necessity for formal observances, and this neglect of all doctrine-these are the signs of the present moment merely and are inherited from the Empire. The hypocrisy which through its pretended religious zeal seeks for power, place, and money, dates entirely from the reign of Napoleon III., and its most fervent practicers are the bourgeois class, the enriched traders and entrepreneurs of that period.

As yet, this show-worship, this theatrical form of selief, has made such a prodigious noise throughout France, that it may perhaps have misled the public as to its strength. It is quite possible that, when things come to a struggle, in which each side wears its own true colors, we may be surprised by the large amount of sincere Gallicanism that will be found among even the clergy, and the solid force of good sense that the laymen will manifest. However, the field is open, now the fight must take place, and we must ere long see whether France is or is not a modern country, in which, according to the new dispensation, nations govern themselves by civil, not by theological principles.

Now, as I wrote two months ago, the other point on which no one can predict what majorities will form themselves is the economical reform. It is all very well to stand in wondering admiration, eyes and mouth open, before M. Léon Say's Endget speech, with its 97,000,000 francs made available for fresh expenses; but the system is a false one, and none knows this better than M. Léon Say himself. What France has been able to bear and to achieve in spite of her late disasters is a matter for the marvel of all the world; but nations don't make progress only by their power of resistance, to wit: they must be developed in proportion to the latent forces contained within themselves. The Budget for 1877 is a great success, because it is dated 1877, and that 1870 and 1871 and 1872 have to be taken into account. But France's capacities are equal to five times that Budget, and as long as the path is not entered upon that is to lead naturally to the real development of the capacities of the country, the system is simply one of mere palliatives. One of the curious features of this particular question is that, generally speaking, the Royalists are better acquainted with and less prejudiced against the grand principles of modern political economy than their | Rex fecit." Republican antagonists. Here Les the importance

of the election of M. Gambetta to the Chairmanship of the Budget Committee. His majority in this case came from the foes of the Government and of the

Republic. The Legitimists secured his election. Last night, in a salon of a neutral tint, I heard the following conversation between a Senator (Republican) and an ultra Royalist (who is not of either Chamber:

"So," said the Senator, "your friends gave us Gambetta yesterday for the Budget report. It was

well done. The Legitimist smiled, and replied: "It may be very well done for us, but I doubt its being agreeable in the end for you (or for Gambetta)."

"Yes," rejoined the Schator, "I know what you think. Your alies think Gambetta knows absosolutely nothing of finance and political economy, and that he will make a mess of the whole business." (The Legitimist chuckled, and nodded assent.) "You are mistaken," said the Senator (who is a very superior man), "Gambetta will have to learn, and work hard to learn; but he is so prodigiously intelligent, that he will astonish you all when he comes to make his Budget report."

This may, and we must hope will be; but I imagine the chances are on the side of the Legitimists. Gambetta knows nothing of economical questionsthat is true-but there does not lie the cause of what may be his failure. Gambetta has (financially speaking) an alter ego, who is a very capable man, but timid and narrow minded, retrograde in his financial ideas, from want of knowledge of the proceedings of the ontside world. I allude to M. Allain Pargé, the Paris Deputy. He is young, sincere, popular, very able, elequent, and possessing a singularly concise and felicitous mode of expressing his thought. He has made financial problems his study, and in him Gambetta has faith. He will probably help the latter to frame his report in technically the most correct language, but I much doubt if any of the real problems which modern finance must solve will be otherwise than timidly

approached. That bugbear, the income tax-which is the direct corollary of the deliverance from food-taxation, and which must be resorted to in order to give complete free play to the unlimited augmentation of the esources of the land-that will, I fear, not be glanced at by Gambetta; for of that Republicans are absurdly afraid, and when the hour comes when the neome tax must be established, and production increase by freedom throughout the entire area of the country, it will probably be a Legitimist or a Bonapartist who will take the initiative and open the fire.

LIFE IN PARIS.

DUMAS AND AUGIER.

THERE IS NEITHER TRAGEDY NOR COMEDY NOW-UNPUBLISHED THOUGHTS OF VOLTAIRE - M. THIERS'S IDEAS STILL RULE-THE KING OF THE INDEES-AN AUTOGRAPH OF VICTOR HUGO.

IFROM A REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE'] PARIS, March 8.—There is no lack of comedy in France, where every one wishes to play his rôle, now that lawyers and physicians have found their high-school in politics. Very soon there will not be spectators enough to fill the theaters. Yet we posless some writers of dramatic genius, such as Augier, Dumas, Sardou, and Meilhac-to speak only of those who hold their places on the boards. The cultivated Parisians who do not besmutch themselves with politics are at present divided between Dumas and Augier. L'Etrangère is the work of a master who, wishing to show himself, perforce, as a universal dramatic genius, has neither produced a drama nor a comedy; but it is a lively piece, and abominably clever.

In an aristocratic society like that of the seventeenth century, the theater addressed itself to but a ingle class, and only illustrated that class-the nobility. In this sense the gentle and poetic Racine is the most realistic of dramatic authors; he masks his characters with Greek or Roman names, because the fashion will have it so, but they all live and move at the court of Lows XIV. It was there that he studied their speech, their passions, and sentiments; and he has reproduced with a truly photographic exactness that speech, those passion is, and sentiments. Achille and Xiphares are simply marquises, as Iphigénie and Monime are duchesses. As for the simple citizen, he has no right to be in tragedy. For whomsoever is not noble, there is comedy, farce, ridicule, kicks, and blows of the sudget! The bourgeois is Georges Dandin, insulted by his father-in-law, flouted by his servant woman, jeered at by his wife, and obliged, the miserable wretch, to cry for pardon and fall upon his kneesas Comedy-before M. de Sotenville, that is to say,

Tragedy! Nowadays comedy and tragedy are fused together in the drama, which is the complete and universal pargeois is no longer the ridiculous character who was once tied up in a sack or knocked down with a club. He has his place in the forum, he demands it also on the stage. The Tiers-Etat has made reality of a famous saying: it was nothing, it is everything. Thus dramatic art no longer speaks to this or that class of society, but to all classes. This is why Alexandre Dumas, fils, tries his hand more and more at comedy; this is why criticism is wrong, when it reproaches him for not loing as others do. The characteristic of art is audacity. What is audacity !-it is an innovating spirit. Commonplace men may create works perfe according to the rules, but that is the perfection of nullity. Formerly we had in France an Abbé d'Aubignac, who gave absolute laws for tragedy: so far, it was well enough. Then he wrote a tragedy to prove that he was right; but his tragedy convinced everybody that he was wrong.

Neither Emile Augier nor Alexandre Dumas has ever put in practice the rules of the Abbé d'Aubignae; and for 21 years past their names have been signed to the strongest pieces on the cotemporary stage. One may say of these that they have the talent which cuts through everything. Each one of their scenes impresses itself on the memory, each one of their words has the true stamp. All intellicent as well as all curious minds are enthusiastic

over L'Etrangère and Madame Converlet, Two years hence we are promised a grand festival in honor of Voltaire, who died in 1778. Of him one may say that the day of his death was the first of his mmortality; he still remains the most living mind of our country. Voltaire bequeathed to France the Revolution of 1789; to Europe, the hatred of darkness; to Humanity, the evangel of good; to the world, the current coin of intelligence. All philosophers, from Plato to Descartes, have built fairy castles and fought with chimeras. Voltaire built the temple of the human mind, and fought with "monsters and superstitions," It has been said of him that he should have died without making a will, as it was said of Jean Jacques Rousseau that he should have died without making a confession. Voltaire, indeed, wrote his will under the dictation of his niece, on the last day of his life, and he forgot the poor because Madame Denis was insatiable. But was this really the will of Voltaire? No: the legacy of a man of genius is his work.

A piece of good fortune has placed in my hands the last manuscripts of Voltaire-thoughts written from day to day, and often during the small hours of the night-the last malice of that unrepenting demen, the last truths fallen from that great soul. I have looked through all the pages of Voltaire without finding these thoughts, except a few in his Philo sophical Dictionary. I give them in the admirable disorder in which I found them, as the engraver who translates the sketch of a master repeats the faults of the original design. We recognize in them the universal Voltaire-religion, love, philosophy, literature, fine arts, history; all the capitals and provinces of that tyrannical monarch of the human

"A people must not be forced. It is a river which cuts its own channel, and you cannot make it change its course."

"Why does one always say, 'Mon Dieu!' and Notre Dame ?" "Even the most sublime author should seek coun sel. Moses, in spite of his cloud and pillar of fire,

asked his way of Jethro." "Inscription for a print representing beggars: "The poets, who have invented everything excep-

Poetry, invented Hell, and were then the first to jeer at it.

We must have a religion without believing in priests, just as we must observe a regimen without believing in physicians." "There is never a miser who does not intend to

make a handsome expenditure, some day: death comes, and the intention is carried out by his heir. This is the history of more than one king of my acquaintance." "Many sarans are like those stars near the pole,

which always move and never advance."

"We treat men like the letters we get; we read them once with eagerness, and do not re-read them." "Who said that words are the counters of sages and the coin of fools ?"

"The bore is a torpedo that benumbs, and the imaginative man is a flame which spreads," "The bed discovers all secrets: nox nocti inficat Sherman, wife of a partner in the banking firm of Dun-can, Sherman & Co. of New-York. It is situated on the

"Cromwell said that one never goes so far as when one does not know whither he is going." "When Roland regained his reason, he accomplished scarcely anything more: a fine lesson for

closing one's life in peace!" "Columbus divined and discovered America: a merchant gave the country his name. A fine ex-

ample of the quid-pro-quos of glory!" "All ages resemble each other as the different ages

of man. There are ages of health and ages of dis-

M. Thiers has not been in power for three years, but his ideas still rule; he told me yesterday that he likes that better. A great mind, as he is, prefers to see its policy in power rather than itself. The proof is that in these three years he has not grown older; if he has had any chagrin it came from seeing the Reaction fail to recognize his aim. It has tinetured my views of humanity with some bitterness to remark that the salons of M. Thiers are much more crowded since the elections have proved him to be right. There are people who worship the rising sun; I prefer those who turn to the setting, or even the sun already set. That is, in regard to friendship. M. Thiers has no rancor; he knows men too well to assume an iron port.

He is the talker par excellence, always. It is a keer pleasure to hear him start off from polities, traverse philosophy, pause before the walls of art, and enliven his gossip with the figures of celebrated wonen. Always new and unexpected, sometimes you would say that you heard History herself talking; ometimes you are in the presence of a philosopher like Montaigne, passing from this to that topic, borne by his tire and fancy. I tell you, verily, it is the miracle of conversation. And that perpetual malice, even in his gravity! How, in his disdain he smiles with a sentiment of Christian charity on all this fury of parties and parts assumed !-nothing is strong enough to anger him. Like a blooded porse, he will not let himself be touched; he tosses his head aloft and speeds whither he pleases. Like Voltaire, he recognizes but one master-the love of Humanity, and one opinion-the public opinion of

But a small number of women visit M. Thiers, for the reason that women do not know how to listenexcept when you speak to them of themselves. Nevertheless, the feminine auditory is charming. Madame Thiers, who keeps all the characteristics of her proverbial beauty; Mlle. Dosne, all wit and fascination; the Duchess Colonna, that sculptress who chisels marble and words; the Princess Troubetskoy, hungry for politics; and finally, Madame Henry Houssaye de Tenneville de Arago, with now and then a distinguished foreign lady, passing through Paris. At the Princess Troubetskoy's may be found the same ladies, together with many others of all parties. I mean, of course, the old parties; The Repullic has not yet its femmes du monde.

In the Princess Mathilde's salon one finds all the fashionable women of the Second Empire. This evening I met there Lord Lytton, who touches Paris on his way to his viceroyalty of the Indies. You know well this so diplomatic diplomatist, this so delightful man of letters, who is soon to reign over 200,000,000 of subjects; he very graciously offered me the hospitalities of his Court. I have told you that he is a member of our "Academic des Spartiates," and I have a hope that he will dine there with us to-morrow in spite of our black broth. It is the first time that a poet has become a king. It is the apsetting of all our ideas; kings have indeed deigned to make themselves poets, but until now poets have never crowned themselves with anything but flowers. We must admit that the poet Lytton is the "double" of a statesman. Besides, what poet would make a worse king than the Eois Fainéants? I trust Lord Lytton will not renounce Satan, nor his pomps, nor his works: the Oriental Muses are wait-

ing for him away yonder. This evening, at the Princess Mathilde's, the love-Indies. A line from Lord Lytton is not only a king's signature; it is an intellectual trait. I have letters

from him which are simply masterpieces.

The autograph munia still rages in Paris. However, it appears that this fine frenzy has seized the Americans, for they write a great deal to Victor Hugo, and they do me the honor of writing much to me, naturally in order to get answers. We are courteous; we reply. The other day Victor Hugo showed me one of his answers:

"Good for \$20, to be given to a poor man. Victor Hugo,"

Laconic, but expensive. Well, no !-it is not dear. Because an autograph of Victor Hugo is worth, or will be worth, twenty dollars. Because those twenty dollars will count twenty thousand in heaven.

ARSENE HOUSSAYE. P. S .- The last sale of autographs should flatter your national pride. I give it to you without farther comment: Samuel Adams, 60 francs; Horatio Gates, 80; Patrick Henry, 100; John Jay, 40; Gen. Lincoln, 30; Robert Livingston, 40; James Madi-

ENGLAND AND THE WINSLOW CASE.

The English Government have,

The English Government have, under the advice of the law officers, refused to give him (Winslow) up to take his trial in the United States of America, and when two mouths from his committal have clapsed—that is, in a month hence—the will be entitled to his discharge, unless the Judges held that the events which have occurred constitute "safficient cause to the contrary" within the meaning of the 12th section of the Extradition acts. The difficulty which has arisen is as follows: Ity the third section of the Extradition acts a fugitive criminal is not to be surrendered to a toreign State unless provision is made by the law of that state or by arrangement that the inglitive criminal shall not, until he has been restored or had an opportunity of returning to ther shall be detained or tract in that foreign State for any offense committed prior to his surrender other than the extradition crime proved by the facts on which the surrender is grounded.

The object of the chause is clear. It is to prevent the process of extradition from being abused by way of procuring tile surrender of persons charged with vulgar erimes, against whom the real accusation is some political offense, from the consequences of which they ought to be profected by our mage of granting asylim to pointical refusees of all parties. We the our own hands in the same way by the 19th section of the act, which provides that where a person has been surrendered to us he shall not be tried for any offense prior to the surrender other than state extradition offense grounded. A clause embodying this primejue is contained in all our modern extradition treaties concluded since 1870 with Germany, Belgimo, Austria, Italy, Denmark, Brazil, Swizeriand, Hondaras, and Hayu; but the American areaty belongs to 1842, and contains no such restriction.

Of contracting only such as surrendered made no provision for containing the charge sgrams him to that grounded on the facts proved here, would commit a grave breach of the law. With sent note the British Government appe

As Charles Lamb was returning to London in a stage-coach after dinner, a person tartust his head in at the coach door and asked. "Are you full inside!" Lamb, pretending to take the query to himself, replied, "I am, for one; that hat slice of plumb panding did my

NEWPORT.

PREPARATIONS FOR SUMMER.

NEW HOUSES BUILT DURING THE WINTER-REPAIRS AND ADDITIONS TO VILLAS-RAPID LEASING OF HOUSES-HOTEL IMPROVEMENTS. FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.

NEWPORT, April 14 .- In common with other vatering places Newport is making preparations for the cuson of 1876, and she anticipates an early as well as a prosperovs season. Considerable building has been done, but not so much as was originally intended, in consequence of the prevailing hard times. However, the chanics have not been idle, as will be seen by the folwing list of new cottages and improvements to thers. Some of the houses mentioned were began last Summer, but were not completed in time to be occu-The most expensive house building is for Mrs. W. Watte

Cliffs in the rear of the residence of Nathan Matthews of

Boston, and near the villa of George Peabody Wetmore of New-York, Mrs. Sherman's brother. Its style is neither Loman nor Greeian, and so far the contractors have been unable to find a name for it. Everything in and about the mansion is antique. Taking away the handsome material used in its finish, however, it reminds one of the houses built a century ago. The size of the house, including the bays, is 53 by 81 feet. The two principal entrances are on the west side, with a vorte cockere on the which opens upon a terrace 13 feet wide, The servents' entrances are in the basement on the west side. The exterior of the first story is of ashlar walls and the four bays and lintels are made of long meadow stone. The remainder of the building above the stone work is composed of wood. The dimensions of the base ment are 15x19 feet, and it contains a laundry 16x20 feet, and a servants' hall 18x20 feet, in addition to a The first floor is number of other smaller apartments. divided off as follows: Vestibule, 14x19 feet ; hall, 18x32 feet, containing a large old-fashioned fire-place. The drawing-room is 16x20 feet, with bays 5x10 feet; the dining-room is 18x20 feet, with a handsome fire-place and massive carved mantel, with bays 6x14 feet. The illurary is 16 feet square, and also contains a very notice-able mantle and has bays 6x16 feet. The principal staircase leads up from the vestibule. It is very massive, being made of black walnut, handsomely carved. The econd story is divided into three dressing-rooms, two bath-rooms, and closets. The third story contains large guest chamber, claborately fluished in hard wood, besides several rooms for the servants, and smaller rooms for various purposes. The dising-room, hall, and vestibule, have ash floors, laid in ornamental squares, and their walls are wainscoted seven feet from the floor. The ceilings of the hall and the hure timbers being in sight. They are, however, incased in black walnut, which tends to do away with the impression that an ancient style had been imitated. The ceiling in the drawing-room is formed into panel-work, with black walnut moldings. The main chimney, which is 5x8 feet, and which extends 12 feet above the roof, reminds one of "ye ancient time." The window-pance are really old-fashioned, the smallest being 34x44 inches, and the largest 3 feet and 10 faches long by 2 feet and 7 inches wide. Another singular feature about the house is the fact that no paint or oil has been used outside, and even the window-sills are to ce left just as they were when the carpanters finished them. It is the wish of its owner that it may look as though it had been built for years. The stable, which is of the same style as the house, is completed. Its dimensions are 25x25 feet, and it is to be used for a carriage se and tenement. The L is 19x35 feet, and is to be used for the horses, of which there will be five. The cost of the house and stable will be \$50,000, and the cost of fitting up the extensive grounds will amount to \$15,000 more. The land, which is very valuable, will make the estate worth in the neighborhood of \$100,000, exclusive of the farmture, &c. It will be occupied early next month by Mr. and Mrs. Sherman. The archite are Messrs. Gambril & Richardson of New-York, and the builders are Norcross Brothers of Warcester, Mass. A handsome gothic cottage has been erected on Rhode

Island-ave, for Harry H. Swinburne, after plans by Dud ley Newton. Its dimensions are 6242x3942 feet. The first story is of brick and the second of wood. The parlor is 19x1412 feef, and is finished in pine and oiled, as are all the principal rooms. The hall is 14x21 feet; diningnot be principled to the property of the property of the end. The kitchen is 14 feet square, and the laundry 10x14 feet. It has plazzas, bays, and balconless. The shirtcase is very unique, it being of frame-work, and no plaster has been used about it. There are four large chambers, the one on the front opening upon a balcony which forms the roof of the plazza. The attic contains servants' rooms, drying-room, &c. The manties are all of hard wood, with soapstone hearths, and open fireplaces of a very pretty design. It cost \$12,000 exclusive of the

grounds or stable. James Rudoiph, builder.
Adjoining this cottage, a villa has been completed, after plans by the same architect, for Miss Susan Woolsey. Its dimensions are 352x352 feet, with an L 22x2314 feet, two stories, with a Newton roof. It has a plagga on two sides, 10 feet wide. The vestibule is 3x101g feet; a hall 17x201g feet, the celling of which is of hard wood. The hall is wainscoted to corre spond to the staircase rail, which is very odd and unique, being cut work of a pretty design. The parliest ladies begged Lord Lytton to write them a lor is 16x17 feet, with an open fireplace, fluished in pine with square bays, 5 2x11 feet, and commodious library cases for an extensive library on four sides of the room. It has a hard-wood ceiling. The dining room is 16x17 feet, with an octagon bay, 512x12 feet, and an open fireplace; butler's pantry, 6x14 feet; kitchen, 14x15 feet; laundry, 12x14 feet. In the main house there are four chambers and one servants' room, with open fireplaces ta three of the rooms. There is a large linen closet in the wing, with three chambers and a trunk room in the attle. The house is rastefully described inside, and it is one of the most desirable homes in that fashfonable avenue. In the hearths of the mantles there are a great many tiles of different patterns, which add greatly to the attractiveness of the rooms. The cost of the house alone was nearly \$20,000. Misses Woolsey are now living in it. James Rudelph, builder.

A large Summer residence has just been completed on

Bay View-ave, which is in the north-western section of the city, for E. W. Willard, a retired Chicago banker. The plans were also furnished by Mr. Newton. The dimenens of the house are 51 gx52 feet, and it is in the shape of a Greek cross. The style is Swiss, and it is built throughout in a very thorough and substantial manner. It has plazzas on four sides, but no bays. There are com modious balconies on four sides opening from three of the chambers in the second story. The kitchen, pantry, Laundry, and wine cellar are situated in the basemen The dimensions of the main hall are 8x142 feet, and it onnects with the staircase hall, which is 12x331g. Be tween the two halls, at the end of the staircase hall there is a parlor, 16x22 feet with sliding doors between that and the staircase. At the right of the hall the library, 18x19 feet, is situated. The dining-room is 15x19 feet, and together with the library it has open fireplaces and handsome mantels. All the principal rooms are finished in pine. In the second story there is a hall, 12x 334g feet, at the end of which there is a chamber, 16x22, with sliding doors between that and the hall. In the attic there is a billiard-room, 19x2612 feet, two servants' rooms, and one chamber. The building cost \$17,000. William S. Cranston of this city, builder.

The same architect has also built a house for Mrs. G. C. Cram of New-York, near the Second Beach, overlooking the Hauging Rocks. The style of the house is modern Gothic and its dimensions are 49x63 feet with a 9 foot plazza on three sides. The balcony from the second story comes out from the front chamber on the east and the floor from the room above projects over this, forming the roof of the balcony. The parlor is 16x20; diningroom, 15x1812 feet; library, 15x24, with a bath-room connected; kitchen, 141gx16 feet; laundry, 12x13 feet; servants' dining-room, 10 gx13 feet. All the principal servants' dining-room, 10¹gx13 feet. All the principal rooms on the first floor are finished in black walnut except the parior, which is finished in buttering, and they all have open fireplaces. On the second floor there are three very large, any chambers, linen closes, and two bath-rooms. Not a particle of paint has been used in the hasile; oil and shellae being used instead. Cost, \$20,000. E. T. Peckham of Middletown, R. I., builder. Whiliam C. Rives, formerly residing in Virginia, who matried a member of the Sears family of Boston, has just becam the creetion of a large brick house on a part of the Sears estate on Red Cross-ave., adjoining the coftage of James M. Drake of New-York. Peabody & Stearns of Boston are the architects, and Woodbury & Leighton and

Sears estate on Red Cross-ave, adjoining the cottage of James M. Drake of New-York. Prabody & Stearns of Boston are the architects, and Woodbury & Leighton and C. E. Clark of Boston are doing the stonework and woodwork respectively. Its dimensions are 60x65 feet, with bay windows up two stories. It is to be built of the best Eastern brick and triumed with olive stone. In the basement there are a laundry, drying-room, and many smaller apartments to be used for various purposes. The parior is 18x19 feet, with bay windows, and is to be finished in butternut and watnscoted. On the second floor there will be six large clambers, and on the should be finished in butternut and watnscoted. On the second floor there will be six large clambers and coveral as in a ler rooms to be used for various purposes. It will cost \$50,000, exclusive of the grounds.

The Summer residence of John Carey, [r., son-in-law of the late William B. Astor of New-York, has received extensive improvements. An addition, 21x24 feet, three stories high, has been built on the north-cest corner, and its roof corresponds with the remainder of the house. The main hall has been extended and cularyed and the staircase handsomely paneled. The tower has been added, and atso a large conservatory, Mr. C. H. Peckharo, who is doing Mr. Carey's work, estimates the probable cost of the repairs at \$10,000. The same builder is about to build an addition 30 feet square to the villa of Mr. Thes.